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RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 3131  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 6992  
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES 4236  
RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1529  
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 1506  
RUEHMN/AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO 3775  
RUEHQT/AMEMBASSY QUITO 4169  
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO 8715  
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL  
RUMIAAA/USCINCSO MIAMI FL  
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP  
RHEBAAA/DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DC  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LA PAZ 001265

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/09/2016

TAGS: [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [BL](#)

SUBJECT: DISCRIMINATION WITHIN THE MAS?

REF: A. LA PAZ 1254

[1](#)B. LA PAZ 1101

Classified By: Charge D'Affairs Kimberly DeBlauw for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: While the GOB continues to ride a wave of euphoria following President Morales' May 1 nationalization of hydrocarbons, an undertow of discontent grows within the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) due to alleged intra-party discrimination based on gender and race, as well as Morales' autocratic bent. The MAS, which promised to include the long-marginalized indigenous in its political program, is increasingly vulnerable to pressure from both sides: the indigenous masses are disappointed that Morales did not include more of them in his party's Constituent Assembly (CA) candidate lists, and MAS party insiders criticize Morales for instituting a new brand of discrimination which appears to favor the indigenous. End summary.

[1](#)2. (C) The GOB continues to ride a wave of euphoria following President Morales' May 1 nationalization of hydrocarbons, but an undertow of discontent is growing within the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) due to alleged intra-party discrimination based on gender and race. Two female MAS representatives in Congress told poloff that the MAS discriminates against women; the party failed to name women to leadership positions on congressional committees, and has not supported bills drafted by its female members. One female deputy admitted that Morales had named a woman as vice-president of Congress, but criticized the move as symbolic. Many MAS deputies and contacts have also cited racial discrimination within the ranks of the MAS, favoring the indigenous and isolating "karas" (a derogatory Aymara word for whites). One deputy, a long-time political ally of Morales, expressed frustration that her ideology seems to matter less than her "class" or race.

[1](#)3. (C) Discontent is also growing with the ranks of the MAS based on President Morales' autocratic leadership style (see reftel A). A MAS deputy confided to poloff that Morales notified the party of his intent to nationalize hydrocarbons at the eleventh hour. The Presidential Palace called MAS representatives at 1 a.m. on May 1 to summon them to the

palace at 4 a.m., where they were told about Morales' plans to nationalize hydrocarbons later in the day. The deputy complained about the "syndicalist" nature of the announcement and Morales' failure to solicit input from his party. At the same meeting, Morales criticized his deputies for not defending him and his policies publicly. MAS representatives were unsure what to make of this criticism, given Morales' standing order that no MAS deputy or senator speak publicly without his express authorization.

¶4. (C) Another example of Morales' autocratic bent is Adriana Gil's expulsion from the MAS party over the weekend of May 6-7. Gil, previously rumored to be intimately associated with Morales, was a substitute municipal council member and MAS youth leader in Santa Cruz, but was also rumored to be "calling the shots" for the MAS' Santa Cruz congressional delegation. In April, she publicly supported MAS militants who seized a Santa Cruz customs office in order to protest appointments made by the central government without their approval, and also publicly expressed support for Brazilian-owned EBX, which the GOB recently shut down for illegal operations (see reftel B). Accusing Gil of perpetuating the "old political system" and contradicting the central government, Morales ordered her (as well as MAS department leader Vidal Quenta) expelled from the party. Gil intends to appeal the decision and denies wrongdoing.

¶5. (C) Comment: The MAS, which promised to include the long-marginalized indigenous in its political program, is increasingly vulnerable to pressure from all sides. On one hand, the indigenous masses are disappointed that Morales did not include more of them in his party's Constituent Assembly candidate lists. On the other, MAS party insiders criticize

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Morales for instituting a new brand of discrimination in Congress which appears to favor the indigenous. As the Constituent Assembly approaches, Morales will have to work to maintain solidarity within his party's congressional delegation and find some meaningful way to include the indigenous in the CA process, or risk losing their support.  
End comment.

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